

Brownfields Supplemental Assistance

Lewiston, ME

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA awarded the City of Lewiston supplemental assistance for its Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot. The declining fortunes of the New England textiles industry has adversely affected the City of Lewiston (population 39,757). The main focus of brownfields cleanup and redevelopment in Lewiston will continue to be the 1.2 million-square-foot Bates Mill Complex. Historically, the eleven-building mill complex employed more than 5,000 people and was the state's largest employer. Economic decline and massive layoffs, however, have resulted in a large abandoned mill and a barren downtown. In the community surrounding the mill, unemployment is 16.1 percent, compared to 7.5 percent for the entire city. The poverty rate in this community is 47.3 percent, while the rate for the city is only 3.9 percent. Lewiston has been designated as a federal Enterprise Community.

Revitalization of Lewiston's downtown and waterfront depends upon returning the Bates Mill Complex to productive use. Because total renovation is estimated to cost between \$70 and \$100 million, the city has renovated the cleanest and most desirable sections of the mill first. Signs of the mill's rejuvenation are beginning to show, with several small businesses

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Lewiston, Maine

Date of Announcement:
March 2000

Amount: \$75,000

Profile: The Pilot targets the 1.2 million-square-foot Bates Mill Complex; in 1950, the textile mill was responsible for one-third of the nation's textiles produced.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflid/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

operating and hundreds of employees working in two sections of the complex. Real and perceived environmental contamination, however, continue to hamper development of the remaining portions of the complex. Approximately 30 percent of the mill has been assessed, with an initial focus on those areas that will be purchased in the near future. The results of the initial assessment work indicates that additional time and resources are needed to produce even greater results at the complex.

OBJECTIVES AND PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Lewiston's objective is to use the Bates Mill Complex as an anchor for downtown cleanup and economic redevelopment and as a catalyst for community job creation. Lewiston will use the supplemental assistance to continue assessments on the existing Mill Complex and to conduct assessments on adjacent properties that will become part of the complex in the near future. The Pilot will focus the assessments on several specific environmental impacts that were identified through the initial assessment work.

To accomplish these objectives, the Pilot plans to:

- Conduct a detailed property-wide soil assessment for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) that present a potential threat to human health during redevelopment activities;
- Conduct a subsurface assessment to determine the nature and extent of contamination near Mill 3;

- Conduct assessments on several adjacent properties, located along Lincoln Street, that are being acquired as part of the Mill Complex project;
- Develop a comprehensive cleanup design plan;
- Expand the strategic planning and community involvement efforts and the public information programs to facilitate cleanup and redevelopment of the Mill Complex.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.